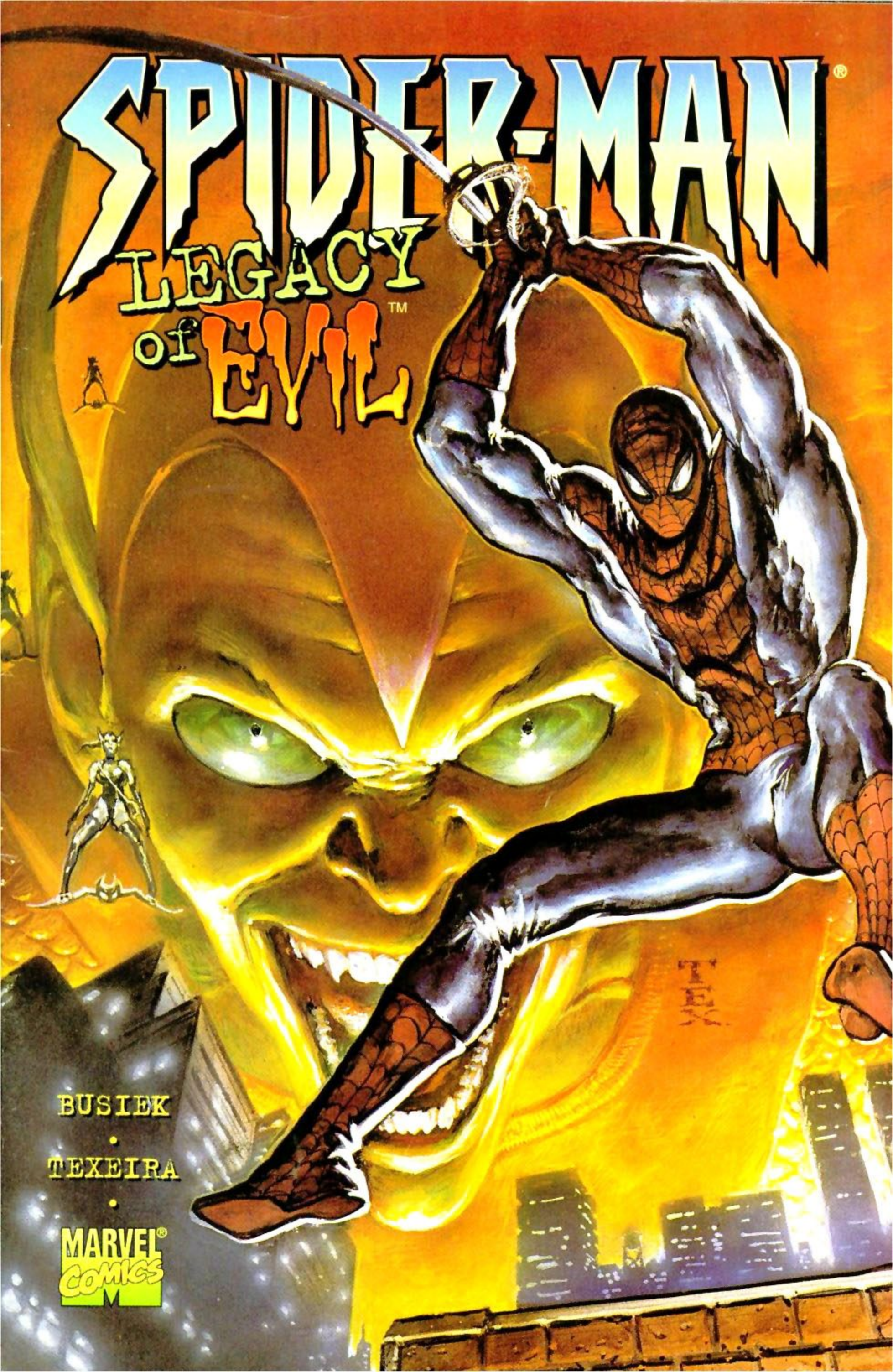
SPIDER-MAN®

LEGACY of EVIL™



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MARVEL COMICS®

SPIDER-MAN LEGACY of EVIL

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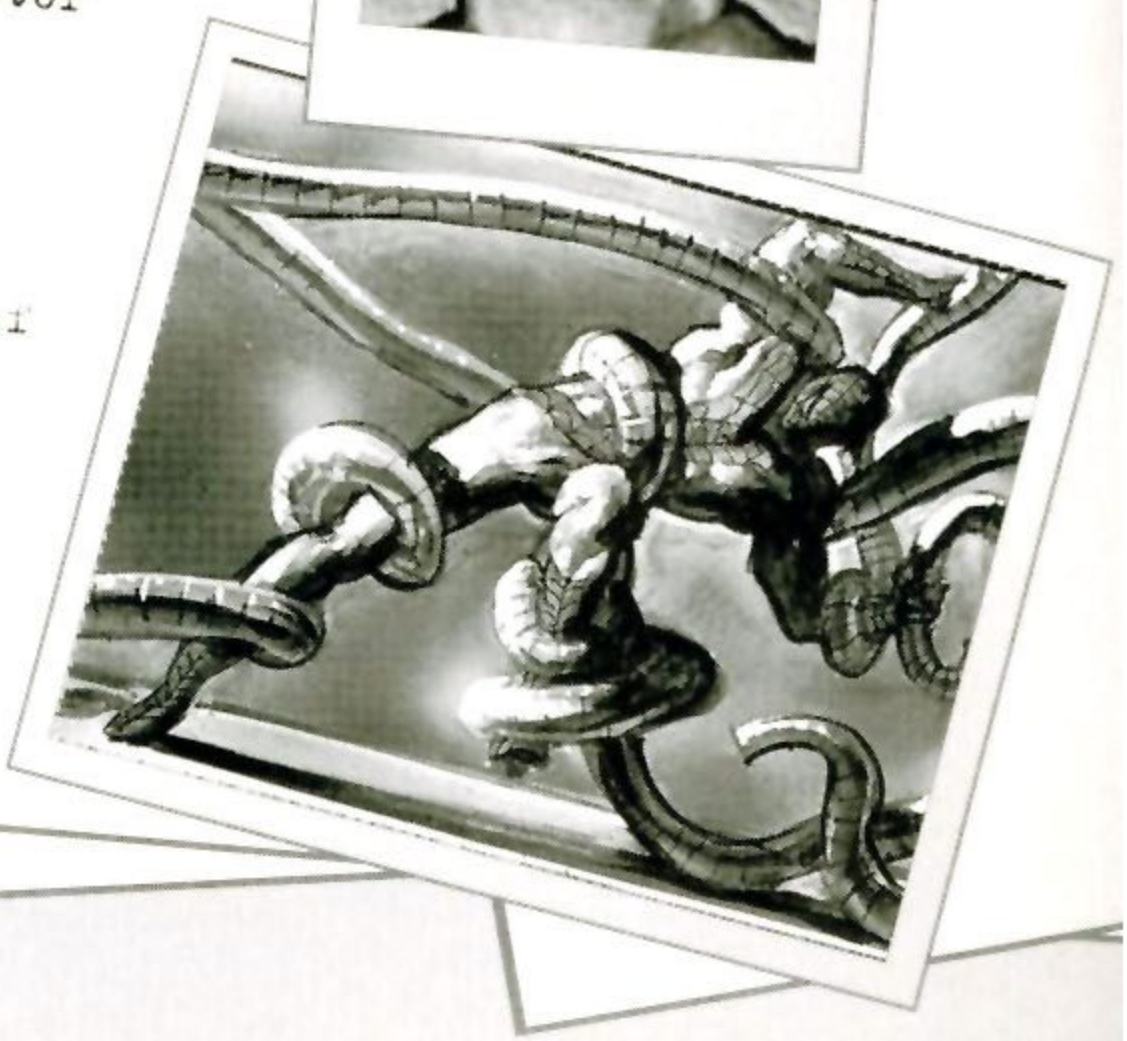
to ERIC FEIN

This story takes
place before
the events of
GREEN GOBLIN #1



My name is BEN URICH. I'm a REPORTER.

Today, the mayor's involved in a SCANDAL, there's a TRIPLE MURDER on Wall Street and INDICTMENTS have come down on "Oily Joe" Guignardi.

Ordinarily, I'd be HIP-DEEP in it.

But not TODAY.

Today, I'm working on my book about the GREEN GOBLIN. Took a leave of absence and EVERYTHING.

So the juicy news of the day happens WITHOUT me, while I sift through the dead and dusty PAST.

Right now, I'm on my way to interview ELIZABETH ALLAN OSBORN, the widow of the SECOND Goblin.

It's a WORTHWHILE project, and I'm glad I'm DOING it --

NOK NOK

But it doesn't make my PULSE race. Not like --

SPIDER-MAN

AAH!

And then -- then it's not just RESEARCH any more --

WHAT IN -- ?

SPIDER-MAN?

-- it's a STORY.

The women try to BRACE Spider-Man, pin him BETWEEN them --

NOW *NOW*, GIRLS -- *MANNERS!* ALWAYS REMEMBER --

-- IT'S NOT *NICE* TO KILL ON THE FIRST DATE!

But fast as he IS --

-- it's STILL two to one.

NNH!

And then it strikes me -- TWO to one?

Weren't there THREE of them?

KRAKOH

-)HK(-

Yes, there were. There ARE.

She doesn't say anything, but she doesn't HAVE to. The blast-unit in her palm makes the THREAT crystal clear --

-- and Spider-Man gets the MESSAGE.

OKAY, GALS -- DON'T HURT THE NICE REPORTER MAN.

I'M ALL BACKED OFF. SEE?

DON'T RESIST 'EM, LIZ.

IT'S THEIR PLAY, FOR NOW.

N-NO, PLEASE --!

The woman is MRS. OSBORN, of course, and the boy is little NORMAN.

SON of the second Goblin, GRANDSON of the first.

N-NOT NORMIE...

I'LL GO *AFTER* --

NO, SPIDER-MAN.

THEY MIGHT... *HURT* NORMIE IF YOU CHASE THEM.

...

YOU'RE *RIGHT.*

LIZ, I'M *SORRY.* I SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STOP THIS.

I SPOTTED THOSE WOMEN AROUND *60TH STREET* -- THEY'RE NOT EXACTLY *INCONSPICUOUS* --

-- AND I FOLLOWED THEM. BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE AFTER --

"-- NOT UNTIL THEY GOT TO *YOUR PLACE.*"

YOU'LL PROBABLY HEAR FROM THEM *SOON.* A RANSOM LETTER, A PHONE CALL...

IF ONLY THEY'D *SAID* SOMETHING -- GIVEN US SOMETHING TO *GO* ON!

BUT THEY *DID* SAY SOMETHING.

HUH?

THE ONE WHO TOOK NORMIE -- SHE *LOOKED* AT ME --

-- AND I COULD HEAR A VOICE... *INSIDE* MY HEAD!

SHE SAID THEY WERE TAKING NORMIE TO RECEIVE HIS *BIRTHRIGHT* --

-- THE *LEGACY* OF THE GREEN GOBLIN!

And then there's SILENCE, but you can feel the question hanging in the air -- what did she MEAN by that? WHAT legacy?

Something about the Goblin's PAST? His POWERS? His connections to the NEW YORK MOBS?

And then the Goblin's WIDOW and his greatest ENEMY look at each other, and they're thinking the same thing --

-- and --

-- and --

-- and why are they looking at ME?

IT'S LIKE ***THIS,*** BEN.

IT WOULD BE EASY TO FIGURE IF ***EITHER*** OF THEM -- NORMAN OR HARRY -- WERE STILL ALIVE. LITTLE NORMIE'S AN *OSBORN*, AND THEY'D ***WANT*** HIM.

BUT THEY'RE NOT. THEY'RE ***DEAD.***

IT COULD ***STILL*** BE HARRY -- I'VE RUN ACROSS A FEW ***POSTHUMOUS COMPUTER-CONTROLLED*** SCHEMES OF HIS --

-- BUT IF IT WERE, HE'D STILL HAVE TO BE WORKING ***THROUGH*** SOMEBODY -- THOSE GOBLIN WOMEN WEREN'T ***HOLOGRAMS.***

SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO BE DOING HARRY'S BIDDING -- AND THAT'S SOMETHING ***I*** CAN ***CHECK OUT.***

YOUR JOB -- IF YOU'RE WILLING TO ***HELP***, THAT IS -- WILL BE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THAT "LEGACY" REMARK ***MEANS.***

LIZ DIDN'T IMAGINE IT -- IT WAS ***TELEPATHY*** OR SOMETHING. AND WHATEVER IT MEANS, WE NEED TO ***KNOW.***

OF COURSE I'M WILLING TO HELP -- BUT WHY ***ME?*** I'M ONLY WRITING A ***BOOK*** ABOUT THE GOBLIN --

-- BUT THE TWO OF YOU ***KNEW*** HIM.

YOU KNEW ***BOTH*** OF THEM.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM. WE'RE ***EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED*** -- WE MIGHT MISS SOMETHING, JUST BECAUSE WE'RE TOO ***TANGLED UP*** TO SEE IT.

BESIDES, ANY *"LEGACY"* HAS TO GO BACK TO ***NORMAN,*** AT LEAST --

-- AND HE DIED ***BEFORE*** YOU MARRIED HIS SON. OKAY, I'M ***IN.***

IT MIGHT BE ***DANGEROUS*** FOR YOU --

-- BUT I'VE GOT AN ***IDEA...***

I sit in darkness and I watch old NEWS FOOTAGE --

-- a T.V. DOCUMENTARY made years ago, back when there had been only ONE Green Goblin.

It doesn't tell me anything I don't already KNOW, of course, but it's good to REVIEW --

-- BAT-SHAPED **GOBLIN-FLIER**, AND ARMED WITH **DEVASTATING WEAPONRY**, HE HELD THE CITY'S MOBS IN A GRIP OF **PURE TERROR** --

-- to remind myself of what they DIDN'T know when they made this -- what NONE of us knew until years later -- that behind the mask --

-- was industrialist NORMAN OSBORN, who'd forced his partner, Mendel Stromm, out of the chemical company they'd created --

TAKE HIM **AWAY**, GENTLEMEN --

-- I'LL BE IN COURT TO PREFER **CHARGES** IN THE MORNING.

-- and who EXPERIMENTED with Stromm's advanced research, accidentally causing a CHEMICAL EXPLOSION --

-- an explosion that gave him ENORMOUS STRENGTH --

-- and drove him INSANE.

His ambition magnified to the point of MEGALOMANIA, he turned to crime, determined to become the HEAD of the New York mobs.

He designed his NEW IDENTITY, and at the same time --

PERFECT!

GET THAT **HANG-DOG** LOOK OFF YOUR FACE! IT **BOTHERS** ME! HOW DID SOMEONE LIKE **ME** EVER HAVE A SNIVELING WEAKLING OF A SON LIKE **YOU?!**

-- inflicted the psychological wounds that would SCAR a young boy and turn him into his father's SUCCESSOR.

It occurs to me to wonder why Spider-Man is so RELAXED in the presence of his enemy's widow, but --

NOK NOK

Hm?

HI.

I'M ***MARK RAXTON,*** LIZ OSBORN'S STEP-BROTHER.

-- BUT I REALLY DON'T ***NEED*** A BODYGUARD.

I WON'T GET IN YOUR ***WAY.***

AND I'M ***QUIET,*** I'M FRIENDLY --

REALLY, I --

-- I MAKE A GOOD POT OF ***COFFEE*** AND I KNOW ALL THE VERSES TO ***"MISS OTIS REGRETS."*** YOU CAN'T PASS UP HELP LIKE ***THAT!***

YOU -- YOU'RE THE ***MOLTEN MAN!***

YEAH, THAT TOO.

LIZ ASKED ME TO ***COME OUT,*** TO WATCH YOUR BACK WHILE YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR ***NORMIE.***

This is SOME family.

WELL, WHEN YOU PUT IT ***THAT*** WAY...

LOOK, I APPRECIATE IT --

WELCOME ***ABOARD,*** RAXTON.

I've got all the time in the WORLD for this, thanks to my leave of absence. I'm ITCHING to write the story --

-- but it's no good me going back for ONE PIECE. I'd never get out again. The Bugle puts CONOVER on it, and he does fine.

Meanwhile, we get STARTED.

There's ONE THING we've got to check out, right off the bat. Nobody wants to do it, but it's got to be DONE.

It takes a favor or two, and a ton of PAPERWORK --

-- but it's a KIDNAP case, and the mother owns a MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR chemical company.

We get the court orders we NEED.

It's not that I doubt Spider-Man's WORD, but in this business you confirm everything you CAN.

So we have HARRY OSBORN'S COFFIN exhumed. And OPENED.

And it's CONFIRMED. He's DEAD, all right.

And then the search begins in EARNEST.

WHOOSH

OKAY, ***HEAR THIS:*** I'M LOOKING FOR ***ANSWERS,*** AND I DON'T CARE HOW HIGH UP YOUR LITTLE UNDERWORLD ***FOOD CHAIN*** I HAVE TO GO --

I talk to the Osborn Chemical PERSONNEL DIRECTOR --

THERE'S NOBODY MUCH ***LEFT*** HERE FROM NORMAN'S DAY. THE IMPRESSION I GET IS, NORMAN DIDN'T LIKE ***COMPE-TITION*** --

-- SO PEOPLE WHO WERE ***BRILLIANT,*** LIKE STROMM AND WINKLER, THEY DIDN'T LAST --

-- AND PEOPLE WHO ***WEREN'T*** BRILLIANT GOT RUN RAGGED TILL THEY ***QUIT.***

AND HARRY GOT RID OF PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE ELSE WHO HAD ***KNOWN*** HIS FATHER. I'VE ONLY BEEN WITH THE COMPANY A ***FEW YEARS,*** MYSELF --

-- AND THE FIRST THING I DID HERE WAS HANDLE SEVERANCE FOR AN EMPLOYEE WHO'D MADE AN ***UNFLATTERING REFERENCE*** TO NORMAN.

-- a few former EMPLOYEES --

I READ HE WAS A ***VICTIM,*** TRAPPED IN A CYCLE OF ABUSE. WHAT A LOAD OF NEW AGE ***CRAP.***

OSBORN WAS A ***HARDCASE,*** PLAIN AND SIMPLE.

IF HE WANTED SOMETHING, HE ***TOOK*** IT.

IF YOU WERE IN THE WAY, ***TOO BAD.***

NO ***FEELING,*** NO MERCY IN HIM AT ALL.

-- some of Osborn's SOCIETY FRIENDS --

NORMAN COULD BE VERY SWEET, VERY ***VULNERABLE.***

BUT HE'D ALWAYS ***DRAW BACK*** IN THE END, CLOSE HIMSELF OFF.

AND IT WASN'T... IT WASN'T A GOOD IDEA TO... ***REFUSE*** HIM...

-- his son's SCHOOLMATES --

I MET HARRY IN ***COLLEGE,*** AND WOULD SEE HIM WITH HIS DAD.

SEEMED LIKE MISTER OSBORN WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH ***BUSINESS*** MOST OF THE TIME.

HE COULD BE VERY NICE, VERY ***GENEROUS*** --

-- BUT THAT WAS A ***RARITY.***

HARRY TRIED HARD TO ***PLEASE*** HIM --

-- BUT IT WAS EASY TO TELL HE NEVER ***COULD***...NEVER ***WOULD***...

-- SO YOU'RE GOING TO ***GIVE*** ME WHAT I'M ***LOOKING FOR,*** OR POINT ME TO ***SOMEBODY ELSE*** TO TALK TO --

-- UNTIL I FIND THE GUY WHO CAN **TELL** ME --

-- WHO'S WORKING FOR **HARRY OSBORN** --

WRAK

-- WHO'S WORKING FOR THE **GREEN GOBLIN?!**

-- former UNDERLINGS --

THERE ARE GUYS WHO DID IT FOR THE **MONEY**, BUT THEY WEREN'T THE BOSSES.

YOUR **MR. BIGS**, YOUR **CRIME-MASTERS** -- THEY WERE IN IT FOR **POWER**, FOR RESPECT --

-- AND THEY NEVER GOT **ENOUGH**. AND THE GOBLIN MADE 'EM **ALL** LOOK LIKE PIKERS.

YOU COULD **TELL**. HE DIDN'T JUST WANT POWER -- HE WANTED **EVERYTHING**.

-- a PSYCHIATRIST at Norman's club --

-- NEVER EXAMINED HIM ***MYSELF***, OF COURSE, BUT I DID OBSERVE HIM OVER THE YEARS --

-- AND I THINK THE GOBLIN WAS AN EXPRESSION OF ***SELF-HATRED***. NORMAN FELT, INSIDE, THAT HE WAS A BAD PERSON, THAT HE WAS ***WORTH-LESS***.

SO HE PROJECTED THAT INNER SELF ***EXTERNALLY***, DRESSING UP AS A FREAK, A MONSTER -- AND THEN ***DEMANDING*** RESPECT AND FEAR FROM OTHERS.

HE WANTED THE VALIDATION HE COULDN'T ***GIVE*** HIMSELF.

-- POLICE DETECTIVES --

HE WAS A ***STANDARD-ISSUE PSYCHO-PATH.***

HE HAD A MAD-ON FOR THE WORLD FOR NOT GIVING HIM EVERYTHING HE WANTED, AND ***RIGHT NOW.***

IF THE ***SUPER***-THING HADN'T HAPPENED, IT WOULD'VE BEEN ***SOMETHING ELSE.*** EMBEZZLEMENT. CUTTING UP WOMEN. ***SOME-THING.***

THE GUY WAS AN ACCIDENT LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO ***HAPPEN.***

-- and even my BOSS, who'd known Osborn well --

NORMAN WAS A ***FINE MAN,*** A GOOD FATHER. A ***MODEL CITIZEN.***

IT WAS ***SPIDER-MAN*** WHO TWISTED HIM INTO THE TRAGIC CREATURE HE BECAME --

-- SPIDER-MAN WHO RUINED HIS ***LIFE,*** HIS ***SANITY.***

MARK MY ***WORDS,*** URICH --

-- IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR ***SPIDER-MAN,*** NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED!

HE'S ***DEAD,*** YOU IDIOT... DEAD AND ***GONE.***

NOBODY'S WORKING FOR HIM. ***NOBODY'S*** CONNECTED TO HIM. DO YOU MAYBE NOT UNDERSTAND ***ENGLISH?***

HE'S ***DEAD...***

I get a little time to MYSELF while Raxton visits his step-sister. Time to think about what I've learned, put it into some sort of order.

I try to imagine what it must've been LIKE. What he FELT.

SOARING above the streets. VEERING and ARCING between the skyscrapers.

Did that bring him JOY -- or did his anger and frustration BLIND him to it -- THRUSTING him along like the rocket engine in his bat-flier?

SOARING above the streets --

HONK

Enough WOOL-GATHERING. I stop trying to put myself into the shoes of a dead man --

-- and head for the AVENUE DINNER CLUB to meet the others.

Back when Mrs. Osborn's FATHER ran the place, the Avenue was one of the most STYLISH nightspots in town.

But that would have been back when she was still LIZ ALLAN -- still just a KID --

-- and now, until her APARTMENT'S repaired, she's living in what was once the MANAGER'S SUITE --

-- and the Avenue's been closed for YEARS.

I remember it so WELL. Doris and I used to come here when we were COURTING.

Dining and dancing. When did THAT fall out of vogue?

I take a DEEP and DUSTY breath --

-- and I think about GHOSTS.

Ghosts of the PAST, that's what we're chasing. MEMORIES, of people and places and hatreds, that won't let go of the LIVING.

They fought here once, too -- SPIDER-MAN and the GREEN GOBLIN. And the HUMAN TORCH, a special added attraction.

What a FLOOR SHOW that must have been.

People at their TABLES, craning their necks to follow the action --

-- scared to LEAVE, scared to STAY, trusting in the Torch but worried about the Goblin.

And SPIDER-MAN -- nobody KNEW what to think about Spider --

EVENING, BEN.

WHAT?! Oh -- oh, IT'S YOU. FOR A MINUTE I THOUGHT --

YEAH, I FEEL THE SAME WAY.

THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TIMES, ONE OF THE EARLIEST BATTLES I HAD WITH THE GOBLIN. BACK WHEN I HAD NO IDEA WHO HE WAS.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

IT WAS TERRIFYING.

THE GOBLIN SEEMED IMPLACABLE -- AN UNSTOPPABLE FORCE THAT WANTED TO KILL ME, AND I HAD NO IDEA WHY.

AS IT TURNED OUT, IT WASN'T PERSONAL. THE GOBLIN HAD JUST PICKED ME TO CRUSH, TO PROVE HOW POWERFUL HE WAS.

ANYONE WOULD HAVE DONE --

-- DARE-DEVIL, THE TORCH, GIANT MAN, ANYONE.

NO, IT WASN'T PERSONAL...

...IT WASN'T PERSONAL UNTIL LATER...

He's not HERE anymore. He's somewhere else, somewhere in the PAST...

...wrestling with GHOSTS...

COME ON, SPIDER-MAN --

"-- LET'S GET **UPSTAIRS.**"

NOTHING. WE FOUND **NOTHING.**

SO... WHAT **NOW?**

THERE MUST BE **SOMETHING** TO DO NEXT...

I WISH THERE **WAS.** BUT YOU CAN'T JUST LOOK **BLINDLY** -- YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE SOMEWHERE -- *ANYWHERE* -- TO START.

WE NEED A **LOOSE THREAD** TO TUG ON, AND SEE WHERE IT GETS US.

SPIDER-MAN. EARLIER YOU SAID IT **"WASN'T PERSONAL UNTIL LATER."** WHAT DID YOU **MEAN?**

PICKED A **THREAD,** HUH? OKAY, I'LL PLAY.

THERE WERE **TWO** GREEN GOBLINS, REALLY. THERE WAS THE ONE WHO WANTED TO RULE THE **MOBS** --

-- AND ALL HE WANTED **ME** FOR WAS TO ENHANCE HIS REPUTATION -- OR TO FIGHT HIS **BATTLES** --

"-- LIKE WHEN HE TRICKED ME INTO TAKING ON **'LUCKY' LOBO'S** GANG FOR HIM.

"THAT GOBLIN WAS **WILY** AND **TOUGH** AND ALL, BUT WHEN THE CHIPS WERE DOWN, HE WAS... A **CRIMINAL.** SMARTER THAN THE OTHERS, BUT NOT **THAT** DIFFERENT.

"AND THEN THERE WAS THE **OTHER** GREEN GOBLIN -- THE ONE **OBSESSED** WITH ME. ALL HE WANTED TO DO WAS TO **HURT** ME, TO HURT THE PEOPLE I **LOVED.**

"HE WAS A **NIGHTMARE.**"

WE **KNOW** THERE WERE TWO GOBLINS -- THERE WAS **NORMAN,** AND THEN **HARRY.**

BUT THERE **WERE** OTHERS.

HOW ABOUT **BARTHOLOMEW HAMILTON,** HARRY'S PSYCHIATRIST? HE WAS THE **THIRD** GOBLIN --

-- AND **HE** WANTED TO BE A CRIMELORD, TOO. MAYBE **THAT'S** YOUR "LEGACY."

NO. HAMILTON'S DEAD, TOO.

BESIDES, HE WAS NEVER **INTERESTED** IN THE OSBORNS -- ALL HE WANTED WAS **MONEY,** AND BEING THE GOBLIN GAVE HIM A CRACK AT IT.

HE'S A **DEAD END.**

THE *HOBGOBLIN*, THEN.

OR THAT... *CREATURE*...

NOPE.

ONLY THE *ORIGINAL* HOBGOBLIN HAD A CONNECTION TO NORMAN --

-- AND ALL HE CARED ABOUT WAS THE GOBLIN'S *ARSENAL*.

HE'D HAVE NO USE FOR LITTLE NORMIE, EVEN IF HE *WAS* STILL ALIVE.

THE CURRENT GUY'S JUST A *CROOK*, AND THE *DEMOGOBLIN*... HE'S NOT EVEN *HUMAN*.

I'M STILL CONVINCED IT'S *HARRY*, REACHING OUT FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE WITH SOME *SICK, TWISTED PLAN*.

WEIRD AS IT SOUNDS, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES *SENSE*.

"HE HAD *TECHNOLOGY* -- A COMPUTER SET-UP THAT COULD TAKE OVER SOMEONE'S *MIND* --

"-- FEED WHATEVER THOUGHTS INTO IT HARRY WANTED TO *PLANT*. THIS *COULD* BE HIM.

BUT WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHO HE'S ***WORKING*** THROUGH. IT CAN'T JUST BE THOSE ***GOBLIN WOMEN*** --

-- SOMEONE MUST HAVE ***RECRUITED*** THEM. SOMEONE DIRECTLY ***CONTROLLED*** BY HARRY.

BUT... ***WHO?***

TKSSH

LIZ?

IF -- IF IT'S SOME ***MACHINE*** --

-- THEN HE COULD BE CONTROLLING ***ANYONE!*** ANYWHERE!

THERE'S JUST NO WAY TO ***KNOW!***

PLEASE -- ***FIND*** MY BABY -- PLEASE --

DON'T WORRY, LIZ. WE'LL ***FIND*** HIM.

WE ***PROMISE.***

But we don't have any LEADS -- any idea where to look NEXT.

All we can do is go out and LOOK --

-- look at some of the OLD PLACES, and hope something'll OCCUR to us --

-- that something'll TURN UP.

HERE'S WHERE THE ***CRIME-MASTER*** TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE CITY'S MOBS -- BUT THE GOBLIN SHOWED UP WITH ***ME,*** AND STOLE HIS THUNDER.

THE COPS DID ***ALL RIGHT*** THAT NIGHT -- CAPTURED A ***BUNCH*** OF WISEGUYS. AND THE CRIME-MASTER LOST HIS ***LIFE.***

GOBLIN GOT AWAY ***CLEAN,*** OF COURSE...

STROM

AND ***HERE?***

ONE OF NORMAN'S LAIRS. IT DOESN'T MATTER -- THE PLACE IS ***LONG GONE,*** BULLDOZED AND REBUILT.

IT'S AS DEAD AS ***HE*** IS.

THE OSBORN ***TOWN-HOUSE.***

I can feel Spider-Man TENSING UP. He doesn't want to BE here -- doesn't want to be ANY of these places.

And when we get to the Osborns's SUBURBAN HOME --

-- I can feel RAXTON go cold, too. He must have been a part of whatever HAPPENED here.

The ghosts of the past are STRONG -- strong and INSISTENT --

Ah, ***MEMORIES...***

-- and they don't LET GO easily.

NEXT ON OUR TOUR DOWN ***MEMORY LANE*** -- THE WAREHOUSE WHERE NORMAN OSBORN ***DIED!***

REMEMBER TO KEEP ***BOTH HANDS*** INSIDE THE VEHICLE UNTIL IT COMES TO A ***COMPLETE STOP*** --

-- AND DON'T FORGET TO PICK UP A ***SOUVENIR T-SHIRT*** IN OUR GIFT SHOP!

There's nothing HERE, of course --

-- nothing but more dust, and more OLD WOUNDS.

WHAT ***NOW,*** BEN?

DO WE FLY TO ***HOLLYWOOD,*** SINCE THAT'S THE FIRST PLACE I EVER ***FOUGHT*** THE GOBLIN?

OR CAN WE ***SKIP*** THAT ONE?

SPIDER-MAN, WE --

I KNOW, I ***KNOW!*** WE'RE TRYING TO FIND A ***THREAD*** TO PULL.

BUT THIS -- VISITING OLD BATTLE SITES -- IT'S ***POINTLESS!*** MOSTLY WE FOUGHT IN THE ***SKY*** --

-- AND WE RANGED ALL OVER THE CITY -- ***EVERY-WHERE!***

IT'S ***DUMB!***

DO YOU REALLY ***THINK*** SO, SPIDER-MAN...

...OR ARE YOU JUST RESISTING THE THOUGHT OF THE ***NEXT*** PLACE ON OUR LIST...

...THE BRIDGE WHERE HARRY OSBORN ***MURDERED*** GWEN STACY?

WHA-A-AT?!

HARRY DIDN'T KILL GWEN --

-- ***NORMAN*** DID! HARRY DIDN'T BECOME THE GOBLIN UNTIL ***WELL AFTER*** NORMAN WAS DEAD!

WHAT? BUT -- THAT'S NOT --

I know I'm on to something IMPORTANT -- that the key might be right in FRONT of us --

KWHOOM

-- but I never get to finish my SENTENCE.

Something we did -- somewhere we WENT, something we SAID --

-- made the Goblin's agent, whoever it is, think we were getting TOO CLOSE.

Sometimes, that's the only way to know you're on the RIGHT TRACK.

ZIK

ZIK

ZIK

MARK! TAKE CARE OF BEN!

ZKAMM

DON'T WORRY ABOUT US, SPIDEY -- WE'LL BE OKAY!

GREAT!

THEN, LADIES --

-- WOULD YOU CARE TO ***DANCE?!***

I registered it all with a part of my mind --

-- but only a PART of it.

IT DOESN'T MAKE ***SENSE*** -- !

WHAT? THEY ***SHOOT*** AT US, WE FIGHT ***BACK*** -- THAT'S HOW IT ***USUALLY*** WORKS!

NO -- HARRY AND NORMAN! ALL ACCOUNTS SUGGEST THAT ***HARRY*** TOOK OVER AS THE GOBLIN SOON AFTER HE STARTED ***COLLEGE*** --

-- WHEN THE GOBLIN'S BEHAVIOR CHANGED FROM CRIMEBOSS TO ***PSYCHOTIC!***

THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED!

SOMETHING ***WENT ON*** BETWEEN SPIDEY AND NORMAN -- SOMETHING THAT DROVE NORMAN ***NUTS!***

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT IT ***WAS,*** EXCEPT MAYBE THEM --

-- BUT THAT'S WHY NORMAN ***CHANGED*** --

-- AN' HE WAS THE ***ONLY*** GOBLIN, UNTIL HE DIED!

By then, the GOBLIN WOMEN have the upper hand against Spider-Man --

GIRLS, GIRLS --

-- but getting the upper hand and KEEPING it are two different things, with him. One moment he's there, the next he's not --

-- NOT SO GRABBY, HUH?

-- and the woman who'd been about to KILL him --

BOSS

ROBOTS!

THEY'RE ROBOTS!

WAIT, WAIT -- THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW! I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT HARRY -- HE HAD NO ALIBI, THE NIGHT GWEN AND NORMAN DIED! HE WAS FOUND WANDERING THE STREETS --

HE WAS THERE. HE SAW IT HAPPEN. HE STRIPPED THE GOBLIN COSTUME FROM HIS FATHER'S CORPSE, TO PROTECT HIS OLD MAN'S REPUTATION.

THAT'S WHAT PUT HIM OVER THE EDGE, I FIGURE.

BUT THEN --

LOOK, URICH, I KNOW YOU'RE A GREAT REPORTER AN' ALL --

-- BUT COULD YOU MAYBE GIVE A LITTLE MORE ATTENTION TO YOUR OWN SAFETY?

ZAK ZAK

BUT --

HEY, MARK! YOU OKAY DOWN THERE?

MY DATES AREN'T BOTHERING YOU TOO MUCH, ARE THEY?

ZAK ZAK

HECK NO, SPIDEY! I'M JUST ENJOYIN' THE SCENERY -- DON'T GIVE ME A SECOND THOUGHT!

WILL YOU QUIT CLOWNING AROUND?

LET SPIDER-MAN DEAL WITH THE ROBOTS! TELL ME MORE!

FINE! I THINK HARRY PRESERVED HIS DAD'S LIES SO LONG HE STARTED TO BELIEVE 'EM! TOWARD THE END, HE THOUGHT HIS DAD WAS A HERO --

-- AND WANTED TO BE MORE LIKE HIM!

THAT'S WHY HE TOOK THE FORMULA THAT GAVE HIS DAD HIS POWER -- THAT DROVE HIM NUTS!

DEAR GOD --

THEN THE INSANITY -- THAT COULD BE THE LINK -- THE LEGACY!

COME NOW, LADIES -- VIOLENCE ISN'T THE ANSWER!

WE'VE GOT TO MEDIATE -- SEE WHAT HAPPENS --

-- IF WE PUT OUR HEADS TOGETHER!

LOOK OUT BELOW -- FALLING ROBO-BITS!

WHKASSH

ARE YOU TWO OKAY?

GEEZ, ARE YOU TWO EVEN PAYING ATTENTION?

-- I KNOW WHO HE'S WORKING THROUGH!

DON'T YOU SEE? HARRY'S OBSESSED WITH HIS FATHER, WITH HIS LEGACY! THAT SPELLS FAMILY --

WHAT -- WHAT D'YOU MEAN?

-- HE COULDN'T IMAGINE TRUSTING ANYONE ELSE! HE EVEN USED ROBOTS TO DO THE KIDNAPPING -- NO NON-OSBORNS NEED APPLY!

BUT -- HIS FAMILY'S ALL DEAD! THERE'S NO ONE LEFT -- !

NOT QUITE.

THERE'S ONE LEFT --

KTAKSH

Oh! WHAT IN --?!

EASY, LIZ. WE JUST GOTTA CHECK SOMETHING.

DAMN. I DIDN'T WANNA BELIEVE IT --

-- BUT SHE'S GOT THE MARKS, ALL RIGHT. FROM THE BRAIN-CONTROL GIZMO.

HAD TO BE, MARK -- THERE JUST WASN'T ANYONE ELSE.

AND THERE OUGHT TO BE... YEP, I'M FEELING A VIBRATION BEHIND THE WALL. RIGHT ABOUT...

--HERE!

The MACHINE Spider-Man described. It's the first time any of us has seen it, but there's no MISTAKING it --

-- it snakes out so FAST --

ONE SIDE, SPIDEY! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!

MESS WITH MY SISTER, WILL HE?

SHAKKT

And like that, it's OVER --

IT'S OKAY, LIZ. IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT -- YOU DIDN'T KNOW --

Oh, GOD -- WHAT KIND OF MOTHER WOULD --

-- MY BABY -- MY POOR, POOR BABY --

-- or so we THINK. We don't see her reaching out for the HIDDEN SWITCH --

-- not until the WALL opens --

A TUNNEL! HE MUST HAVE CONDITIONED HER -- TO RUN, IF SHE WAS DISCOVERED!

COME ON!

But he'd thought about MORE than that. Not only what she'd do if she was DISCOVERED --

-- but what would happen if she was FOLLOWED.

KOOM KOOM

THE TUNNEL -- IT'S *COMING DOWN!*

KOOM

YOU TWO KEEP *GOING!*

GET OUT OF RANGE -- GET TO WHERE THE ROOF'S STILL *HOLDING,* BEFORE --

KRRMP

HE'S *GONE* -- !

HE'LL BE *OKAY.* HE'S TOUGH. BUT WE KNOW FOR SURE WE'RE DEALING WITH ONE OF *HARRY'S* GAMES NOW.

ASIDE FROM THE *MACHINE* BACK THERE -- *WHY?*

THIS WHOLE *TUNNEL.* NORMAN WAS DEAD BEFORE HARRY *MARRIED* LIZ -- SO ONLY HARRY COULD HAVE HAD IT *BUILT.*

IT HEADS DOWN -- OUT UNDER THE *EAST RIVER,* FROM THE LOOK OF IT. LET'S SEE WHERE IT --

Oh, MY.

GHOSTS of the past. Not yet ready to REST.

The lair is OLD -- we're surrounded by clammy, damp air, and the smell of ELECTRICITY, MILDEW, and BURNT RUBBER INSULATION.

And the face is NORMAN -- as if the mind within the mass of circuits and wires had decided who it truly WANTED to be --

-- long after BOTH its choices were dead and gone.

The face is Norman, Norman and the GOBLIN. But the VOICE --

-- the voice is HARRY.

Ah, THE **REPORTER!**

BENJAMIN URICH, ISN'T IT? I READ YOUR WORK FOR **YEARS,** FATHER AND SON. FINE WORK -- YOU'VE GOT AN EYE FOR THE **TELLING DETAIL.**

PLEASE, JOIN MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW ON THE **DAIS** -- YOU CAN BE OUR WITNESS, TO TELL THE WORLD WHAT A **MOMENTOUS OCCASION** THIS IS.

BUT AS FOR **YOU,** SPIDER-MAN --

HI, MOMMY!

MOMMY?

And that GREEN GLOW from the vat -- it has to be --

-- I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO DIE!

AWP!

-- it's got to be STROMM'S FORMULA!

Oh, COME ON --

-- HAVEN'T WE BEEN THROUGH THIS ONCE ***ALREADY*** TONIGHT?

LIZ, YOU'VE GOT TO SNAP ***OUT*** OF IT! OR HARRY -- NORMAN -- ***WHATEVER*** YOU WANT TO CALL YOURSELF, YOU'VE GOT TO ***LISTEN!***

STROMM'S FORMULA -- IT GAVE NORMAN ***MANIACAL POWER,*** BUT ONLY BY ACCIDENT! FULL STRENGTH, IT'S WHAT ULTIMATELY ***KILLED*** HARRY!

USE IT ON NORMIE AND YOU'LL KILL YOUR ***SON,*** YOU HEAR ME --

"-- YOU'LL ***KILL*** HIM!"

THAT'S... NOT GOING TO ***HAPPEN,*** BEN!

I'M...

...NOT...

SCHRACKAKK

...GOING TO *LET* IT!

KWHOOSH

Oh, ***MARVY.*** THIS DIVE IS ***WAAAY*** OVERDUE FOR MAINTENANCE.

RIP OUT ***ONE*** WEAPONS SYSTEM, AND THE WHOLE PLACE STARTS TO ***FALL APART!***

YOU'VE GOT TO ***DO*** SOMETHING -- TO ***STOP*** THIS -- !

*DON'T GET **HYSTERICAL**, MR. URICH. YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO TOO MANY OF SPIDER-MAN'S **LIES.***

*MY GRANDSON -- MY SON -- HE'S IN **NO DANGER.** HE'S MERELY RECEIVING HIS **LEGACY**... AT LONG LAST!*

LIZ -- !

B-BEN...?

IS...IS NORMIE IN ***TROUBLE*** ...?

Great -- at least SOMEONE's coming to their senses...

WHKAM

ANOTHER ONE! THIS ENTIRE LAB'S A ***CHAIN REACTION*** WAITING TO HAPPEN!

*I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE **MUTTERING** ABOUT, SPIDER-MAN --*

-- BUT IT WON'T SAVE YOU!

THASSH

Uh-oh!

Anesthetic darts --

NGH!

At least I HOPE they're only anesthetic -- since he doesn't quite dodge ALL of them --

MOMMY? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO DADDY AN' GRAMPA?

THEY'RE GOING ALL WOOGY!

YOU ⸗SKIK⸗ SEE? YOU SEE? HE CAN'T ⸗SKIK⸗ RUIN MY PLANS THIS TIME!

HARRY, I'M... I'M WORRIED. I KNOW YOU DON'T REMEMBER, BUT THAT STUFF -- IT IS WHAT KILLED YOU.

YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO HURT YOUR SON, WOULD YOU?

That's IT, Liz --

-- keep him TALKING! If we slow him down enough -- long enough for the ELECTRICITY to fail --

JOINING THE NAY-SAYERS, LIZ? I THOUGHT YOU ⸗SKIK⸗ ABOVE THAT! BUT VERY WELL --

-- WE'LL LET NORMIE DECIDE!

DO YOU WANT TO WIMP OUT, NORMIE --

-- OR DO YOU WANT TO BE A SKIK MAN, LIKE YOUR DADDY AND GRAMPA?!

I -- I --

WELL?

Ah!

PFOOM

I WANT MY MOMMY! I DON'T LIKE IT IN HERE! I WANT MY MOMMY!

Pfah! TYPICAL.

FINE, THEN. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO ACCEPT YOUR LEGACY. BUT I ALSO KNOW --

N-NO --

-- HE'S NEVER GONNA L-LET HIM --

-- THAT TO BECOME MEN, SOME BOYS --

-- JUST NEED A LITTLE PUSH -- !

NO...

NO -- !

YES!

JOIN US, BOY! THIS IS YOUR LEGACY, YOUR ~~SKIK~~ BIRTHRIGHT!

THIS IS YOUR DESTINY!

P-PLEASE...

GOTCHA.

THASSA GOOD BOY! YOU WASN'T **SCARED**, HUH?

GOTTA GEDDIM **OUTTA** HERE, LIZ, BEN. PLACE IS GONNA **BLOW UP** --

-- ON'Y **SEC'NDS** LEF. IF W'LUCKY...

NO! *YOU WON'T* ǂSKIKǂ ***WIN!*** *WE WILL* ǂSKIKǂ *HAVE OUR FUTURE!* ***WE'LL HAVE*** *OUR* ǂSKIKǂ *DESTINY --*

And then the explosions come faster and FASTER, until it seems like just one continuous RUMBLE --

-- and the air is full of RAGE and THUNDER --

-- and the legacy of NORMAN and HARRY OSBORN --

BOOM

-- is BURIED with their ghosts.

Oh, NORMIE -- oh ***NORMIE*** --!

YOUR UNCLE MARK AND THESE NICE MEN WORKED SO ***HARD*** TO FIND YOU, NORMIE -- AND WE'LL NEVER LOSE YOU ***AGAIN*** --

And then there's only ONE question left, one PUZZLE-PIECE that'll finish the story --

BLASS'ED ANESTH -- ANESTH --

BLASS'ED ***DRUG***-DARTS!

-- and I've got to ASK it --

WHAT ***WAS*** IT, SPIDER-MAN? WHAT ***HAPPENED*** BETEWEN YOU AND NORMAN OSBORN --

-- WHAT ***WAS*** IT THAT CHANGED THE ORIGINAL GREEN GOBLIN FROM A POWER-HUNGRY ***CRIMELORD*** INTO A REVENGE- OBSESSED ***LUNATIC?***

WHAT... WHAT ***HAPPENED?***

HE ***KNEW...***

...AND ***I*** KNEW...

...AND HE COULDN'T...

...HE JUST COULDN'T ***STAND*** THE THOUGHT OF...

...THE ***THOUGHT*** OF...

NO.

I CAN'T ***TELL*** YOU, BEN. THAT'S JUST ONE QUESTION THAT'S GOING TO HAVE TO GO ***UNANSWERED.***

That's all right. I have a SUSPICION where it would lead. And I've been DOWN that road once, with Daredevil.

I don't need any more stories I'll never WRITE. Let the man KEEP his secrets.

I break my promise to myself and I go to the Bugle and I write up the story for the NEXT DAY'S EDITION.

And then I field a call from CITY HALL, and that's another one. And then another, and ANOTHER...

...until JONAH and ROBBIE stuff me into a cab and tell me not to come back until I'm done with at least a FIRST DRAFT.

And sure, there's a few facts still to CHASE DOWN, but I've got the HEART of it.

Legacy of Evil
The True Story of the Green Goblin
by
Benjamin Urich

Eventually, I print out a draft. And it's GOOD. But still --

-- something's not RIGHT --

It's not a LEGACY. Not any more.

Harry tried to pass it ON, but it ended with him. Just another GHOST to be laid to rest. The Osborns are free of their FAMILY CURSE --

-- and the WORLD is free of the GREEN GOBLIN. Forever.

THERE.

HEY, UNCLE BEN. WHAT'S THE *HAPS?*

HI, PHIL. JUST WORKING ON MY *BOOK.*

COOL! CAN I *READ* IT?

SURE...

...I DON'T SEE WHY *NOT.*

DYNASTY

THE END

The Green Goblin. It is a name and image that has become synonymous with unfettered evil and madness. Norman Osborn and his son Harry were both possessed and ultimately consumed by this super-villainous identity and have since met their deaths, leaving their hated enemy, the amazing Spider-Man, and the other survivors of their reigns of terror to pick up the pieces and move on with their lives.

But evil never dies.

With the kidnapping of young Normie Osborn — the son of Harry and the grandson of Norman — these survivors learn that the specter of the Goblin is very much alive! Now, Normie is being prepared to inherit his birthright: the legacy that was passed from father to son, and is now about to be passed on to the next generation of the Osborn family... the legacy of the Green Goblin!

Spider-Man and Daily Bugle investigative reporter Ben Urich must now begin a journey of discovery into the history of the Goblin, for only in the past can they find the clues that will help them locate the child and save him from a life of insanity and villainy!

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